

same time proving themselves of the greatest service to suffering humanity. These nurses will be found in touch with every advance movement which is in any way connected with their profession. They reach out helping hands in every direction. Their services are sought and fully appreciated and their knowledge respected. They are valued members of society wherever they are to be found. They are ever on the alert, and though quiet and very modest, make steady and sure progress.

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## THE HYGIENE OF THE HOUSEHOLD

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“ . . . I LOVE to see Nature do her spring house-cleaning in Kentucky, with the rain-clouds for her water-bucket and the winds for her brooms. . . .

“ How she dashes pailful and pailful into every corner, till the whole earth is as clean as a new floor. Another day she attacks the piles of dead leaves, where they have lain since last October, and scatters them in a trice, so that every cranny may be sunned and aired. Or, grasping her long brooms by the handles, she will go into the woods and beat the icicles off the big trees, as a housewife would brush down cobwebs. . . .

“ This done, she begins to hang up soft, new green curtains at the forest windows, and to spread over her floor a new carpet of an emerald loveliness such as no mortal loom could ever have woven.”

So writes James Lane Allen in his charming little idyl, “ A Kentucky Cardinal,” showing us in his inimitable style that Dame Nature is thoroughly up to date in the modern hygienic method of spring house-cleaning, and it only remains for us to follow her good example through April’s sun and showers.

I wonder how many house-mothers have paused to consider the value of sunshine and fresh air, not only in our bodies, but also in our homes, for here lies the very first principle of the hygiene of the household.

One writer brought forward lately the theory that to the absence of sunshine in the flats and apartments of our large cities might possibly be traced—to some extent—the cause of the number of children we see in the streets disfigured by spectacles, as he argues that their eyes are weakened by groping around in semi-dark rooms.

Is it not the case that in the larger number of apartments—even those of high rent—the only room into which the sun shines is the parlor or reception-room, the part of the home least used by the family?

Our grandmothers’ idea that we ought never to sleep in a room

which the sun does not visit some part of the day is a good maxim, and if acted upon would prevent much sickness.

It is not necessary in this little article to go into the details of house-cleaning, as the art is already well known; my aim is to give a few suggestions as to the way the home may be furnished and maintained according to the most approved methods of hygiene without detracting from its artistic appearance.

Shall we take, to start with, the modern nursery. What mother does not delight in fitting up her nursery in the daintiest manner for the wee folk? At the Pan-American a nursery was shown that was a thing of joy and beauty, besides having a firm groundwork of common-sense. We will follow on the lines it has laid down.

Walls covered with burlap,—a bright, cheery color,—which when enamelled may be washed with soap and water as often as required. (There is a firm in Boston which makes a specialty of nursery wall-papers, inexpensive and yet capable of being washed without injury.) The carpet plain and strong, lined with extra heavy felt, so that the little ones may play on the floor and not be in danger of taking cold. The windows draped with white muslin or net curtains, well looped back to let in lots of sunshine and to allow the children to see the outer world.

On the walls hang up some colored pictures, which might be cut from magazines. Copies of good paintings with correct but not harsh coloring will assist in training the child's eye. A row of shelves on one side, wide enough to hold toys, and covered by flowered cretonne, to be entirely given over to the children, so that each one may have an especial shelf for his own belongings. The chairs might be of willow-grass, bamboo work, or soft, green prairie-grass, easily movable, pretty to look at, and kept clean without trouble, and a low table with tiny chairs for the younger ones who are learning the delightful Kindergarten games and books.

On a high shelf in an adjoining closet should be kept an alcohol stove, saucepan, measuring-glass, spoon, safety matches, etc. Need I add that medicines must be kept locked up, and, if possible, on a high shelf out of the child's reach, for fear that through carelessness the key might be left in the door.

If an open fire is necessary in the nursery, a wire screen, completely covering the fireplace, should never be out of place.

Hang up a canary in one window, stand a bowl of gold-fish and some growing plants in the other, and your little ones will have a nursery fit for a king's son and arranged according to the latest laws of hygiene.

I have purposely omitted to mention the beds, as I wish to urge the importance, when it is practicable, of following the English custom

and having a day and night nursery. The night nursery may be much the smallest, and, if necessary, in another part of the house, containing only the iron or brass bedsteads, with hair mattresses and hair pillows, the bed for the nurse, and a chiffonier. It has been proved by all who have tried this plan that it adds immensely to the health and comfort of the children.

The night nursery may be aired all day, the day nursery all night, and as the larger part of the child's life is spent in the nursery,—even to the taking of meals in some homes,—the advantage of a change from one room to another is plainly to be seen. However, in small houses it is not possible to give up two rooms for this purpose, and therefore a double amount of care must be taken in airing the nursery night and morning. In a future talk I hope to go more fully into the question of ventilation, but at present I will pass on to the other rooms of the house.

The bed is of necessity the central point in the sleeping-rooms, scrupulous cleanliness and snowy whiteness its chief adornment.

I have no liking for colored draperies except in the homes of the very wealthy, where heavy damasks and brocades of delicate tints may harmonize well with stately surroundings, but in the average American home white is the daintiest, most suitable, and most restful of all colors. Draperies, counterpane, pillow-shams or bolster-case of dimity, lace, net, or more serviceable material, with a touch of color in the ribbon that loops the drapery and runs through the lace beading of the pillow-covers.

The graceful brass or iron bedstead has taken the place of the old-fashioned wooden structure, which filled up half the room with solemn grandeur, and offered secure hiding-places for the popular ghost or burglar behind its voluminous drapery.

The feather mattress is so entirely a thing of the past that it is needless to do more than mention its healthier and more comfortable sister, the hair mattress. Blankets that may be washed or cleaned at least once a year are far preferable to the colored comfortable, which adds so much dead weight to the bedclothes without giving an equal amount of warmth.

One is far more inclined to drop down on a sofa during the day for a few moments' rest than if obliged to disturb the snowy draperies of the bed, so a lounge at the foot of the bed or in a cosy corner is required to invite the over-tired mother to close her eyes for a brief space to the household cares, and an Italian blanket or light rug must be within easy reach to throw over her, or a cold will surely follow.

Busy women who are much on their feet will appreciate a low dressing-table, where the hair may be dressed while seated.

A polished floor, with rugs to be shaken every week, is of the utmost

importance to prevent the accumulation of dust and germs that might be inhaled while sleeping.

One set of window draperies, white or soft cream, with dark shades or blinds to shut out the early morning light, is desirable. And here I would say a word about the importance of placing the bed so that the light will not fall directly on the eyes. I have been surprised to find that no thought of this is taken in the average home, and yet the early morning headache many people suffer from is often due to this fact, as I have proved by bitter experience.

Above all, don't crowd your rooms with useless fripperies. There are bedrooms where everything is ruffled and embroidered, and where the eye is bewildered by the heap of useless trifles kept "for show."

In a recent publication there appeared a description given by a trained nurse of a case of nervous prostration which baffled all attempts of physician and nurse to relieve the sufferer, and no apparent cause was found to account for the continued depression.

The nurse studied the case earnestly, and finally told the doctor she thought she had solved the groundwork of the trouble. The patient lived in a most luxurious house, but from garret to cellar it was so crowded with furniture, bric-a-brac, curios, and drapery as to give a feeling of suffocation after living in its atmosphere for even a few days. The patient's bedroom in particular was overflowing with useless frills; hardly a space on the wall not covered with a picture; tables and mantel loaded with bric-a-brac; bed, dressing-table, couch, pillows, and patient's clothing covered with ruffles of lace and fine needlework which had taken her months of close work to accomplish; and, finally, the windows were draped heavily with four sets of curtains, entirely shutting out sunlight, view, and air.

After an earnest consultation with the doctor the nurse took possession of the spare bedroom,—which was decorated in like manner as the rest of the house,—had everything removed, and fitted it up in the simplest style.

Only three or four good pictures were allowed on the walls, the bed arrayed in simple white coverlet and hemstitched draperies. One pair of net curtains framed the windows and a green shade softened the light. A comfortable lounge, easy-chair, few bright books, photographs and magazines, growing plants, and open fire completed the arrangements, and then the patient was carried in and placed on the lounge in front of the window, where she had an uninterrupted view of the sun setting behind some glorious hills.

At first she was distressed and amazed at the change from her overcrowded, shut-in room, but gradually a look of rest and peace crept into

her eyes; and in the days that followed the anxious lines which had gathered in her face over the care of her many belongings vanished, and ere long she arose from her bed of sickness with the quiet, restful, contented spirit she had lost sight of for years in the struggle to ornament her home.

(To be continued.)

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## LEAVES FROM THE NOTE-BOOK OF A BELLEVUE NURSE

### LECTURE III.—FLUIDS OF THE BODY

(Continued from page 437)

THE human body is composed of three different elements, viz.:

- (1) Solids—Muscle, Nerve, Bone.
- (2) Fluids—Blood, Lymph and Chyle, Transudations, Secretions, Excretions.

- (3) Gases—Oxygen, Nitrogen, Carbonic.

Of the solids of the body we will have little to say now. The fluids may, for the sake of convenience, be subdivided into (1) those fluids that remain in the body and have a constant chemical and physical character, except for the changes that occur in them as a result of the process of regeneration and functional action in the body. These fluids consist of (1) blood, (2) lymph, (3) chyle. The two classes of body fluids do not exist preformed in the body, and are of three distinct kinds in character, viz.:

- (1) Secretions—Gastric, Saliva, Bile.
- (2) Excretions—Urine, Perspiration, Bile.
- (3) Transudations—Peritoneal, Pleural.

#### SECRETIONS.

A secretion is a fluid that is formed in the body, by glands and epithelium, out of entirely different substances that are furnished by the blood, and when they have been used for the purpose for which they were intended, they are reabsorbed by the blood as the elements from which they were made by the glands.

#### EXCRETIONS.

Excretion is not a part of the blood,—it does not exist preformed in the blood, but is composed of effete matter. The blood acts simply as a vehicle to carry it to the proper organ in the body. The excretions